

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOR UNITED METHODIST
Canton, Ohio

The McKinley Pew

This booklet contains a detailed explanation of
the three needlepointed cushions
in the pew which
William and Ida McKinley occupied.
during their years of membership
in this church.

These cushions include symbols and motifs
dealing with the life of our
martyred President
who was an active member of our church.

He served as a Sunday School teacher,
Sunday School Superintendent, and
a member of our Board of Trustees.

His funeral service was held here in
our Sanctuary in September 1901
following his assassination in
Buffalo, New York.

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOR UNITED METHODIST

McKinley Pew

For many years the pew in our Sanctuary which was occupied by William and Ida McKinley has been marked with a silver plate.

The three needlepointed cushions covering it were dedicated in January 1986 and serve as a further tribute to the memory of our martyrd President and his wife.

These cushions are replete with illustrations covering the events and affiliations in the McKinleys' life and career.

The various symbols were selected -- after extensive research -- by Mrs. Alex (Betty) Prentice of our church and by Debbie Forsythe, a commercial artist who was commissioned to paint the designs on the canvas for the stitchers to follow.

A group of eight volunteer needlecrafters -- members of our church -- devoted about eighteen months to this set of cushions. The left-most one (nearest the center aisle) was the work of Mrs. Paul (Sally) Fenner; the center cushion was stitched by Mrs. Atlee (Harriet) Evans and Mrs. Larry (Stephanie) Bradford; the third one (closest to the McKinley memorial windows) was the work of Mrs. Jack (Peg) Maxwell.

Stitching the many many yards of plain green needlepointed boxing on these cushions were: Mrs. John (Susan) Bair, Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Prentice, Mrs. Herbert (Edna) Rogers, and Mrs. Allan (Dorothy) Trimbach.

Following is a detailed description and explanation of the various symbols and motifs which are contained in this trio of cushions.

Cushion #1

The first of these cushions (closest to the center aisle) deals with William McKinley's earlier days.

The McKinley Family coat of arms -- harking back to the days of their Scottish and Irish ancestors -- contains the gules stag salient, gazing dexter and marshalled on a field azure. This suggests that perhaps the early ancestor to whom it was granted was a hunter of considerable prowess. The escutcheon carries below it a scrolled ribbon, with the motto "Not Too Much", possibly a tribute to the virtue of moderation.

The portion of the Ohio map on which is marked "Niles" indicates William McKinley's birth-place.

Close by is the American flag (note that it contains 30 stars) and the battle flag under which McKinley served. He was attached to Company E, of the 23rd Regiment of Ohio Volunteers, which was part of the First Brigade, Second Division of the Eighth Corps, under the command of Colonel E. S. Scammon. The bugle with the "23" encircled was his regimental insignia.

When McKinley -- who had entered as a private -- was mustered out of service in 1865 it was with the rank of "Brevet Major", the chevron insignia of which is adjacent to the bugle. (it should be noted here that while the insignia resembles today's non-commissioned sergeant, and was not the present shoulder strap oak leaves a Major wears today, it was indeed the proper insignia of a Major of the Civil War era.)

Below these motifs we see a slate, covered with writing, an open school book and an apple -- a trio of references to his early days as a school-master.

Farther down, there is an envelope, addressed and stamped, a subtle reminder of his connection with the Postal Service.

The entwined wedding rings and the "WED 1871" are in recognition of his marriage to Ida Saxton in that year.

Toward the center of this cushion the motifs deal with his public service career. The Great seal of Ohio is in recognition of his two terms as Governor of our state (1892 and 1896) We call your attention to the fact that the seal shown here is the authentic one from that earlier period, and differs somewhat from the one used today.

The traditional GOP elephant, of course, marks his Republican affiliation.

To the left of the elephant is a pictorial reference to his multiple terms in the House of Representatives, spanning the years from 1877 to 1891.

Rounding out the story this cushion has to tell us we find, at the top, the Square and Compass, significant of his Masonic affiliations, which included not only his membership in Canton (in Blue Lodge #431, formerly Eagle Lodge, subsequently re-named William McKinley Lodge in his honor) but also his membership in the Canton Commandery of the Knights Templar.

To the right of this we see the seal of Allegheny College (where he did his undergraduate study) and the seal of the Union University Law School at Albany, New York (where he earned his Law degree). Superimposed over these two are the Scales of Justice, in token of his standing as a practicing attorney.

Nearby is the purple and gold diamond shaped insignia of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity in which he held honorary membership. During his term as Governor, the Ohio Sigma chapter of that body -- located at Mount Union College in Alliance -- conferred that honor on him. This, of course, is the Methodist college on whose Board of Trustees he served for a number of years.

Cushion #2

The center cushion in the McKinley Pew features portraits of William and Ida McKinley. Framing that of the President we see his favorite flower, the carnation; Ida's favorite flower, the pink rose, accompanies hers. The color of the famed "McKinley carnation" has been the subject of ongoing debates: reliable sources have determined that although his choice was actually the pink carnation, somewhere along the line the public adopted the red one, even to the point of the State Legislature subsequently naming the red carnation as the official flower of Ohio. Our designing artist compromised by painting carnations that were a mixture of pink and red, and our needle-pointers stitched them accordingly.

Also pictured in this cushion are two angels encircling the McKinleys' two little girls who did not survive childhood. Kate, the first of their daughters, was born in 1873, and little Ida was born in 1877. The baby Ida died in infancy and Kate shortly thereafter.

Featured in this cushion also are ribbon banners bearing the words: "It is God's way. His will be done, not ours," the utterance he is said to have made on his deathbed in Buffalo, following the assassination shots.

In recognition of his long and close association with our church, the present-day logo of Church of the Savior is included. This is a combination of two of the best known Christian symbols, the more prominent of which is the cross, the eternal symbol of our faith. In the background appears the X and R (Chi Rho) the first two letters of "Christos," our Savior's name in Greek.

Cushion #3

The third cushion in the "McKinley Pew" -- the one closest to the west wall of the Sanctuary -- contains illustrations dealing with the presidential years of William McKinley's life.

We see pictured the front porch of the McKinley home, from which the bulk of his campaigning was done. William McKinley was so solicitous of his wife Ida's health that he was reluctant to take his campaign out across the country, and so his supporters "brought the campaign" to him, with trainloads of voters being brought in to Canton to hear speeches he delivered from the porch of his home.

Also shown are some of the platform adjuncts of his candidacy: "Gold Standard Protection" -- "Reciprocity" -- "Good Times."

The central portion of the cushion contains the Seal of the President of the United States, and worked into the area around it are the dates during which William McKinley served in his two terms in that office: 1896 - 1901.

McKinley's election precipitated him into a time of turmoil and crisis almost immediately. Economic woes were only one small phase of it. Military problems were another.

Surrounding the presidential seal are pictorial references to some of the crises with which McKinley was confronted.

The illustration of the map of Cuba, accompanied by the slogan "Remember the Maine" harkens back to the turbulent days of the Spanish-American war.

The war between the United States and Spain was a war for humanity and William McKinley's handling of the grave situations connected with it proved him to be a truly great leader. In the end, the Treaty of Peace that was signed transformed the political geography of the world, by establishing the United States' authority in both hemispheres and also in the tropics, where it had never before extended.

The picture of a cannon being fired, and the palm tree in the background -- along with the legend: "Philippine Insurrection" -- tells us immediately the confrontation to which it refers.

The map of China -- accompanied by the legend "Open Door Policy" -- is in reference to that special triumph of American diplomacy which gained the United States an equal footing with the other major nations in our pursuit of shipping and trade with the Far East.

Campaigning for his second term in office, McKinley promised to dedicate himself to promoting prosperity for the people of the United States. The "full dinner pail" from his previous campaign is accompanied by a picture of a factory building whose puffing smoke stacks bespeak full employment. Accompanying these logos are the tri-color ribbons with the words "Re-elect" and "1901."

Also illustrated is yet another far-reaching measure which William McKinley set in motion. The map of Central America and the phrase "Panama Treaty" tell of the efforts put forth to create a shorter route for the shipping lines to follow in traveling from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back. He was successful in overcoming the resistance - and competition - which the United States initially encountered from some of great sea powers.

The Buffalo Exposition - whose insignia is included in this grouping -- was an enterprise designed to bring into closer relationship, both commercially and socially, the republics and colonies of the Western Hemisphere. Held in Buffalo, New York, it opened formally in May of 1901, and in September a day was set aside designated as "President's Day." McKinley, accompanied by his wife, journeyed from Canton to Buffalo where he delivered a stirring and inspiring address. The following day, having attended a concert, the President was greeting throngs of people when an assassin fired a bullet at close range, striking McKinley in the abdomen, wounding him seriously.

Eight days later -- September 14, 1901 -- he died.

Beside the Exposition Seal is a firing pistol and date 1901 -- a reminder of that event which had closed the final chapter in the life of William McKinley.

The McKinley National Memorial Monument -- one of our city's most notable structures -- is included here also. It is located on the near west side of Canton, on a high knoll overlooking a peaceful park area.

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McKinley's body was brought back to Canton for final services, and it was here in our Sanctuary that they were held.

Dr. Manchester, pastor of our church at the time of the McKinley funeral - and a close personal friend of McKinley - delivered the eulogy and it is fitting that we close with his words:

"We gave him to the nation but a little more than four years ago. He went forth with the light of the morning on his brow, but with his task set, and the purpose to complete it. We take him back now, a mighty conqueror."

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOR UNITED METHODIST

120 Cleveland Avenue, S. W.

Canton, Ohio 44702-1913

Ministers: Everyone in the congregation

Pastors:

William R. Harvey and Charles E. Tobias

Pastor Emeritus: Howard J. Wiant

Minister of Music B. Thomas Vise

Minister of Music Emeritus: W. Robert Morrison

Minister of Christian Education: G. Marlene Peterson

Parish Visitor: Margaret Papas Youth Director: Jeri Johnson

Membership Outreach Coordinator: Judy Radosevic

Missionaries in Zaire: Marvin and Jean Wolford



Our Mission Statement:

To EXPERIENCE the new life in Christ.

GROW in the new life and

SHARE the new life with others.

